

Message Text

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ACTION NASA-02

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 OES-06 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8602

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 1860

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: TSPA

SUBJECT: NASA STATION

REF: STATE 277312

1. SOLOFOSON LISTENED ATTENTIVELY NOV 16 WHEN I ORALLY GAVE HIM SUBSTANCE OF REFTEL, AFTER WHICH HE OBSERVED THAT USG DID NOT HAVE ANYTHING NEW TO OFFER. HE SAID THAT WE HAD ALREADY, IN OCT 1975, INDICATED THAT WE WOULD RELEASE TO GDRM EVERYTHING EXCEPT TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT WHICH WE WOULD SEEK TO RECOVER. HE SAID THAT USG MUST BEAR IN MIND THAT GDRM MUST RESPOND TO MALAGASY PUBLIC OPINION OVER ISSUE OF NASA STATION AND, THEREFORE, US TERMS AS OUTLINED REFTEL DO NOT ACCOMPLISH THAT PURPOSE.

2. I REITERATED THAT USG HAD ENCOUNTERED CONSIDERABLE COST AS RESULT OF STATION'S CLOSING AND THAT ALTHOUGH WE DID NOT INTEND TO SEEK COMPENSATION FROM GDRM, EQUIPMENT AT THE STATION REMAINS USG PROPERTY AND WE DO NOT ADMIT TO ANY OBLIGATION ON OUR PART TO RE-PURCHASE THAT PROPERTY. AS HE HAD INFORMED ME ON PREVIOUS OCCASION, SOLOFOSON STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT GDRM RECOGNIZES THAT PROPERTY AT STATION STILL BELONGS TO USG. I REPLIED THAT THIS MAY SOUND FINE TO HIM, BUT IN ACTUAL FACT WE DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO OUR OWN PROPERTY AND THAT IS WHY WE

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SEEK RESPONSE TO OUR TWO PREVIOUS DIP NOTES IN ORDER TO

REMOVE TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT WE WISH TO RECOVER. SOLOFOSON CLOSED BY NOTING THAT USG HAD DECLINED GDRM'S SUGGESTION THAT SUITABLE QUID-PRO-QUO WOULD BE USG PURCHASE OF ONE HERCULES AIRCRAFT GIVEN TO GDRM AND, THEREFORE, USG HAS NOT CHANGED ITS POSITION ONE IOTA. AS PREVIOUSLY, I REPEATED THAT HIS SUGGESTION WAS OUT OF QUESTION AND TOTALLY UNREALISTIC. SOLOFOSON THEN NOTED THAT GDRM OFFICIALS WERE CLOSE TO SIGNING CONTRACT FOR TWO HERCULES AIRCRAFT.

3. COMMENT: SOLOFOSON DID NOT BECOME UNFRIENDLY AS RESULT OF THIS DEMARCHE, BUT HE APPEARED TO REGRET THAT HE COULD NOT REPORT TO RATSIRAKA THAT WE HAD MADE ANY PROGRESS. HE OBVIOUSLY FEELS THAT USG MUST NOW SHOW A SIGN OF BEING MORE FORTHCOMING, SINCE GDRM TOOK THE INITIATIVE TO OPEN THIS DIALOGUE.

4. IN MALAGASY EYES, BALL IS STILL IN OUR COURT. HOWEVER, SINCE SOLOFOSON SHOWED UNEASINESS OVER PROGRESS OF GDRM PURCHASE OF TWO HERCULES, WE MAY HAVE AN UNANTICIPATED SOURCE OF LEVERAGE PROVIDED BY MALAGASY THEMSELVES WHO, I.E., RATSIRAKA, DEARLY WANT THOSE AIRCRAFT.SHEINBAUM

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